

Keys to ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Success



STARTING OFF THE SCHOOL YEAR RIGHT

Engage your children in discussions about the school year before it begins. Help set a positive, curious mindset that starts them thinking about their potential. By asking questions, you keep children actively engaged in envisioning their school year.

- **Avoid asking yes or no questions** to keep the discussion moving
 - **Ask:** What are you looking forward to in school this year?
 - **Ask:** What are you nervous about?
 - **Ask:** What do you hope to learn?
 - **Ask:** What do you wish to get better at?
 - **Ask:** What are some of your goals for the year?
- Help them to imagine themselves in the future and to create a vivid fantasy of what they will be like. Engage them in thinking about the steps they need to take to get there
 - **Ask:** What do you want to be when you grow up?
 - **Ask:** What do you need to learn in order to do that?
 - **Ask:** Where would you like to go to college?
 - **Ask:** How do you imagine yourself in ten years?
 - **Ask:** Where will you be living?
 - **Ask:** What do you need to do in order to get there?
- Talking about how school helps children acquire the skills they need to achieve their dreams

Summer Learning

Avoid the “**summer slide**,” which is when kids lose academic skills over the summer, particularly in math and language arts. Some students spend the first month or two of each school year relearning the skills they lost over the summer. The summer slide is also accumulative, which means that a little bit each year could set children a year or more behind by the time they finish elementary school. Help your children start off the school year at the

same place or ahead of where they left off at the end of the year.

- If there were summer learning packets or reading lists sent home, make sure your children have completed the required activities and/or reading
 - Ask your children to think about why the teacher assigned these activities or books
 - Check for understanding by asking them what they learned
 - **Keeping a journal or writing letters to friends** over the summer is an excellent way to maintain writing skills
 - **Flashcards** can be a quick and easy way to review math facts when school is out
 - **Set mini goals** with your children each week and devote 5 minutes a day to each goal. Celebrate when the goal is met
- **EX:** Learn all the “doubles” addition facts by the end of July (2+2, 3+3, etc.)
 - › **Learn a new word** each week. Subscribe to an online dictionary’s word-a-day program for suggestions. Try using it in sentences throughout the week and memorizing the definition by the end of the week
 - › Solve thirty **single-digit multiplication problems** within sixty seconds
- Your local library may have a summer reading program that encourages kids to read as many books as they can. Also check the library for recommended reading lists based on age and/or interests. **Reading for fun is key**
- If your child was getting significant individualized support at school during the school year, consider finding a tutor who can work with your child over the summer to maintain the skills acquired. If that is not possible, purchase a level-appropriate workbook and work on sections of the book throughout the summer



ESSENTIAL PARENTAL SUPPORT

Create a Positive Attitude Every Day

Infants and toddlers are naturally eager to learn and proud to show off new skills. Your child can have the same attitude in elementary school if there is a positive mindset. Remember that elementary years will be a series of small and large successes, and full of developmental and academic milestones. Every child has the potential for success. Strive to help them see their own potential.

- Create excitement for school, teachers, and learning
 - Stay positive about school and teachers in front of children
 - Let your child hear you affirm your gratitude for the school and teachers
 - Talk about the positive qualities and traits of your child’s teacher
 - Do not complain about issues with the school or teacher when your children are near, even if you don’t think they are listening
 - Discrediting the authority of a teacher or school even once to a child sends conflicting messages that can impact a child’s behavior and motivation
- Talk to children about school every day
 - Give the discussion your complete attention to show them how important school is
 - › Showing your interest proves that there is value in what they learn on a daily basis

Continued on page 2

WHAT IS A **QuickStudy** GUIDE?

Clear, concise information

containing key facts, definitions & formulas

Laminated

Handles daily use or spilled coffee

Road map for the course

Over 28 pages of info condensed

Covers some of the toughest courses taught today!

Full-color
illustrations & diagrams



- › What did you learn in math today?
- › What did you work on in art?
- › What was your favorite part of the day?
- › What was your least favorite part of the day?
- › What was something you found challenging today?
- The teacher is not the only one teaching your child. Become part of the team with your child's teacher and school. The stronger the team, the greater potential for your child's success
 - Parental involvement requires consistent, two-way, meaningful communication regarding a child's academic achievement
 - Get to know the members of various advisory committees that influence your child's education
 - Be involved in decision making that affects your child, especially scheduling, special services, class placement, etc.
 - A fully committed team improves optimism for all, including your child
- Volunteer when possible
 - Show your children you are also committed to their school
 - Let the teacher know what kind of volunteering you are interested in and available for. Volunteer opportunities often range from helping teachers make copies to helping set up for school events
 - Family involvement in school is linked to increased self-confidence and more positive attitudes and behaviors among children
- Celebrate your child's successes at school
 - Not only should good grades be acknowledged, but also completing a difficult project, solving a hard math problem independently, being a good friend to a classmate, etc.
 - Use encouraging language that **recognizes the child's deed or effort** rather than general praises
 - › **Say:** I can tell you worked really hard on that
 - › **Say:** This looks to me like your best work
 - › **Ask:** How do you feel about your work on this?
- Avoid punishing a child for receiving bad grades. This may build stress, negativity, and anxiety about school performance. Instead, reward positive behaviors that are contributing to success (e.g., improved study skills, finishing all homework)
 - If you are concerned about your child's academic performance, set up a meeting with the team at school. With your child present, discuss ways for better support
 - Ask your children for suggestions on what kind of support they need
 - Offer encouragement and help rather than blame or punishment

Partnership with the Team

- Build a positive parent, teacher, and student relationship. Get to know your child's teacher.
 - Greater family involvement is connected to higher grades, greater homework completion, and stronger motivation in children
 - Family participation in school is a greater indicator of a child's success than any other factor
 - Children whose families partner with their school achieve better academic and social success
- Communicate often, in whatever form the teacher prefers to communicate with parents (e.g., emails, notes, school website, phone, face-to-face)

- Attend all parent-teacher conferences and requested meetings
- Know that you can request the presence of "specials" teachers (e.g., the art or music teacher) at parent-teacher conferences
- Participate in back-to-school nights, math nights, school performances, and other events for parents held at school
- At the beginning of the year, help all teachers involved in your child's education get to know your child better. Share:
 - Your family's vision for your child's future
 - How your family supports your child at home
 - Your child's negative and positive traits
 - Your child's physical, emotional, or academic strengths and weaknesses
 - Your child's talents and passions
 - Any stresses your child currently faces at home
 - Any problem behavior will be best addressed when it is treated similarly at school and at home
- Ask the teacher for suggestions
- Keep up-to-date on occurrences at school
- Let the teacher know about occurrences and/or improvements at home
- Positive behavior can be used for encouragement and motivation by the teacher in the classroom and by you at home
- Inform teachers about your child's cultural background and any unique family practices
 - The more teachers know about the diverse cultures in their classrooms, the more culturally sensitive they can be
 - The more teachers know about your child's upbringing, the less likely they are to make assumptions
- Use parent-teacher conferences as an opportunity to ask questions, not just to listen. Prepare questions beforehand and bring them with you
 - **Ask:** Is my child on grade level in reading, math, science, and writing?
 - **Ask:** How is my child doing socially?
 - **Ask:** How do you support the children's social development?
 - **Ask:** What do you see as my child's strengths and weaknesses?
 - **Ask:** Do you think my child needs extra support in any area?
- Ask your children often how they feel about school and what happens there
 - Thoughts and feelings about the teacher, classmates, and classroom
 - Likes and dislikes about the school day
 - Allow free expression of excitement, anxieties, and disappointments
 - Stay calm and thank them for expressing their feelings
 - Remain positive that even struggles can be overcome
- Let the teacher know when your child is struggling with a social or academic issue at school
 - Do not assume that teachers already know about problems and are ignoring them. They may just be unaware or your child may be doing a good job hiding difficulties
 - Be open to hearing what the teacher has to say about your child's behavior
 - › Children sometimes act differently at school than at home
 - › Consider negative reporting as an opportunity to help solve problems. Try not to be defensive or make excuses. Stay calm



WHEN TO USE QuickStudy

- As a road map for your classes
- At the start of the year as an overview to visualize how all the elements of the class will fit together
- All school year to refresh & reinforce the content
- During homework to understand and find answers quickly
- During class to find facts fast
- To prepare for a test
- When on the go



DAILY ROUTINES & SUPPORTS

Children can better meet expectations when they know what is expected of them. Clear, consistent routines help elementary school children learn how to take care of themselves. They need your help to establish routines and develop the discipline to stick to them.

Every Morning

- Have your child wake up at the same time every morning
- Establish a getting-ready-for-school morning routine and stick to it
 - Make a morning routine chart with your child at the beginning of the school year. After a few weeks, it may not be needed
 - A rushed or chaotic morning can create stress that extends throughout the day and interferes with learning. Avoid this by sticking to the routine
- Sit down together for breakfast, even if only for a few minutes, and even if only one parent or caregiver is available
 - Breakfast should be healthy and balanced to avoid sugar and mood crashes later
 - Eating breakfast helps children have energy for their day and stay focused until lunch
 - Talk to your child about healthy food and beverage choices
- Go over the day's schedule, including after-school pick-up and/or activities

Morning Routine

- Make the bed
- Get dressed
- Eat breakfast
- Put dishes in the sink
- Brush teeth, wash face & comb hair

Evening Routines

- Sit down together for dinner, even if only one parent or caregiver is available
 - Talk about the food you are eating, where it came from, and how it was prepared

- Children who share family meals tend to have a more nutritionally balanced diet
- Have your child go to sleep at the same time every night, even on week-ends. Older children can set their own alarm clocks and know when they are expected to wake up
 - Make an evening routine chart with your child at the beginning of the school year. After a few weeks, it may not be needed
- Spend a few minutes each night talking to your children about what went well that day or what they are looking forward to tomorrow
- Make sure your children get enough sleep. Children ages 6–9 need about 10–12 hours of sleep per night
 - Well-rested children are happier and healthier
 - Tired children have more difficulty focusing in school, controlling their emotions, and finding energy to participate in activities
 - Sleep-deprived children may be more aggressive or prone to hyperactivity
 - You'll know your children are well-rested when they wake up feeling good, not tired
- Avoid all screen time for at least two hours before bed
 - Staring at TV, computer, tablet, or phone screens before bed makes falling asleep more difficult
 - Make a family rule about screen time before bed and hold everyone to it, even yourself

Evening Routine

- Collect homework & other school materials for the next day
- Pack backpack
- Bathe/Shower
- Change into pajamas
- Put dirty clothes in the hamper
- Brush teeth
- Pick out clothes for the next day
- Set an alarm

DEVELOP A HABIT OF REINFORCEMENT

Learning takes place both in school and at home. Much of a child's academic success depends on how learning is reinforced and supported at home. Stay involved.

- Read the weekly newsletters or curriculum maps (planning guides for the year) provided by your teacher or school. These give you a general idea of what your child is learning
 - Use this information to help plan other activities and outings to reinforce learning
 - Show positive curiosity in the things being taught at school
 - Your attitude will affect their attitude
 - Have high expectations. Let them see your confidence in their abilities
- School curriculum is developed and updated based on statewide and national standards, which describe the skills, facts, or topics your child should learn in each grade. Understand the academic standards your state follows. Ask your teacher for parent guides to the standards. Know the grade-level expectations for your child. In general, students get exposed to a topic or concept early in their elementary years and then build more detailed, practical knowledge on that concept as they advance. Cross-curricular, project-based learning units are also becoming more common, in which students use concepts they have learned in various subjects to make connections and problem solve a real-world problem. Some common standards to know are:

- The Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

Supporting Math at Home

- Reinforce math concepts with real-world activities. Even if you think you are "not good" at math, you can support your child
- Generally, in grades K–2, your child will focus on addition and subtraction. In grades 3–5, your child will focus on multiplication and division
- Learning mathematical language is crucial for developing mathematical thinking. When your children are solving math problems or talking about what they learned in school, encourage them to use math vocabulary
 - Instead of "I had to figure out how big the field is," try "I had to find the area of the field"
 - Find picture books based on mathematical concepts (ask your librarian for help). Discussing the stories using language from the book is a great way to bring mathematical vocabulary into conversation
- Show your child how math is used in everyday life
 - If your child is learning to count, have him count the number of strawberries in the package



EQUATION FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS!

QuickStudy



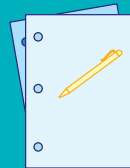
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Textbook



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Class Notes



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Boosted
GrA⁺des

- Find patterns in your home or in nature. Make patterns with beads, beans, or pasta shapes
- Categorize items by color, size, shape, or other traits
- Help your child make different types of graphs showing how many books, dolls, cars, or other toys she has
- Encourage explorations with numbers using calculators, phones, spreadsheets, etc.

Supporting Literacy at Home

- Tell stories (made up or real) that have a beginning, middle, and end
 - Occasionally leave off the ending of the story and have your children make it up
- Discuss future plans and describe the sequence of events leading up to them
- Talk to your children about the books you are reading and the characters in them. Compare them to books your children are reading. Talk about how the characters are alike and different
- Ask your children about the books they are reading
 - How would you describe the main character?
 - What happens in the beginning, middle, and end of the book?
 - What did you learn from the book?
 - Why do you think the author wrote the book?
 - What was the main idea?
- Create a reading nook for your child somewhere in the house. This should be a comfortable, well-lit spot for reading and writing where you keep books, notepads, pencils, and crayons
- Write notes to your children, point out things you have written on the calendar, etc.
- Encourage your child to help you make lists or to write/draw in a journal about his/her day
- Visit bookstores, libraries, and story hours
- Take a "picture walk" through a picture book before you read together. Look only at the pictures, share observations, and make predictions about the characters and what will happen. See if the predictions were right

Supporting Science & Social Studies at Home

- View the night sky together and talk about the Earth, Sun, and Moon
 - Connect this to conversations about the universe and Earth's place in the universe
- Talk about the weather, seasons, and climate changes each day
 - Track the weather. Keep a graph of sunny days, rainy days, and cloudy days
 - Record the temperature each day for a month
 - Read weather maps or forecasts in the newspaper or online
- Take walks in nature. Notice the bugs, bees, caterpillars, plants, etc.
 - Connect these conversations to discussions about life cycles, teamwork, transformations, ecosystems, etc.
- Plant a small vegetable garden, even if it is on your windowsill or is a single pot by your doorstep. Talk about what plants need to survive and thrive
- Study and measure shadows. Track the sun in the sky at different times throughout the day



FUN & PLAY

Kids need time to release stress, relax, and have fun, just like adults do

- Save free time for your child to have fun and be a kid
 - Just as time should be scheduled for reading, homework, and responsibilities, there should also be time each day for unstructured play and outdoor time
 - Free time and play help reduce stress and keep children happy
 - Spending time outdoors helps children relax and stay physically healthy
- Give children choices on how to spend free time
 - Once children have completed their responsibilities for the day, let them choose how they will spend their free time (within limits). Give them options to choose from (e.g., more playground time, time with friends, sports)
 - Encourage them to develop a variety of friendships and spend time with friends
- Do not forget to include time in your schedule to spend as a family in ways that contribute to all of your well-being
 - Dance together, sing together, make art, go for a hike, or watch a silly movie
 - Find a family yoga or music class
 - Choose a healthy menu and prepare dinner together



TECHNOLOGY & SCREEN TIME

Limit Screen Time

Children should have no more than two hours of screen time each day. This includes TV watching, surfing the Internet, movies, apps, and video games. Limiting screen time creates more time for reading, family and friends, and physical activity.

- Help children track their screen time on a chart so they can see what it adds up to by the end of the day
- Limit your own leisure screen time to two hours a day as an example
- Try to "unplug" completely one day a week with no screen time for the whole family
- Avoid all screen time before bed

Internet Safety

The Internet can be an incredible learning tool and provide a wealth of information when used appropriately. Keep your children's Internet usage safe to protect your child from potentially dangerous content.

- Use safe-search filters to block inappropriate content
- Find apps that block inappropriate content on phones and tablets
- Talk to your children about what to do if they feel frightened or confused by something they see on a website
- Keep the computer in a centrally located spot in the house. Supervise Internet usage as much as possible

Testimonials

"This guide provides the information needed to support learning in the classroom. This will definitely be helpful when school starts again."

- Jane S., Mom

HEAR WHAT PARENTS & TEACHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT QuickStudy

"Awesome for students or myself requiring a quick review or simply a study guide of the key essentials of the subject matter."

- Jacob N., Teacher

"Excellent and very handy for both teachers and students. It is a condensed summary of all the essential topics provided in the textbook. I bought it for my self as an outline, and I recommended it to my students."

- Maureen M., Teacher

HOW DO YOU QuickStudy ?

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